Picture: Lucia Nadia Cipriani

Family Chronicle: The Heritage and History of the Cipriani-Merolli Line

This chronicle serves to preserve the legacy and examine the social and moral history of a defining era (1870–2020).

I. The Genealogical Connection (The Joining of the Branches)

The families were united through the marriage of Vincenzo Cipriani and Gabriella Merolli.

The Cipriani Branch (Ceccano/Rome): Established by the forefather of the craft, founder of the Antica tappezzeria Cipriani dal 1870.

The Merolli Branch (Celano/Avezzano): A lineage of legal scholars and literati from the Abruzzo region.

II. Detailed Biographies: The Ancestors

1. Enea Merolli (Maternal Grandfather)

Birth: Monday, March 3, 1879, in Celano.

Family: Married to Giovanna Gorgo.

Studies: Law (1900/01), Physiology & Philosophy (1905).

Profile: Jurist and poet under the pseudonym "Ariele di Lem."

Key Event: Survivor of the Great Avezzano Earthquake (January 13, 1915).

Published Work: Il Trionfo della Vita (The Triumph of Life, 1916).

Death: Friday, December 27, 1963, in Avezzano.

2. Vincenzo Cipriani (Patriarch of the 13 Children)

Birth: September 10, 1905, in Ceccano.

Profession: Entrepreneur in upholstery and interior design. He managed the atelier at Viale Parioli 91 in Rome, employing up to 10 staff members.

Siblings:

Filomena Cipriani (1908–1988), mother of Isolina.

Maria Cipriani (1920–2010), seamstress and housekeeper (see below).

A second sister named Maria, who passed away in early childhood.

Later Years: Spent his final years in a nursing home; he suffered from Alzheimer's disease and, toward the end, could no longer recognize all of his children.

Death: March 19, 1991.

3. Gabriella Cipriani-Merolli (Mother of the 13 Children)

Birth: February 12, 1918, in Chieti (Abruzzo).

Profile: Master of the curved needle, manager of the atelier, and poet.

Published Work: The poetry collection Vigna Clara (32 pages, 1963).

Death: July 5, 1964, in Rome (at age 46) due to cervical cancer.

III. The 13 Siblings (Born at Via Eustachio Manfredi 17)

All children were born at Via Eustachio Manfredi 17, 4th floor, Apt. 16 (Parioli district)—a tall, yellow building with long, sweeping balconies.

Giovanni: Cultural manager, passionate bibliophile, and collector of rare books. Resides at Via Salaria 300.

Armando (b. July 10, 1947): Initially ran an upholstery business with his wife, Laura (Grasseti). Later became an entrepreneur and managing director of the "Piscina Don Bosco" swimming complex in Rome for 15 years. He is the only sibling still living in his birth neighborhood (near Villa Gloria), just minutes from Via Manfredi. His son, Alessio, also worked in the family business.

Luigi: Master upholsterer. He managed the "Antica tappezzeria Cipriani dal 1870" until its closure in October 2020 (due to the pandemic lockdown), marking the end of a 150-year tradition.

Lucia Nadia (Lucina): Born February 27, 1955. Lived at Via Manfredi until age 6. Emigrated to Austria in 1975. Artist and oriental dancer. Lived for many years in Salzburg (Mönchsberg, Siezenheim, Plainstraße 27) with her partner Peter Siegfried Krug. Based in Hallein since 2016, active in choirs (Halleiner Liedertafel).

Maurizio: Worked initially in Germany (logistics), then as an upholsterer in Rome; now retired.

Maria Teresa: Widow of Pino Oddo († 2015). Mother of the dancer Serena Oddo in Rome.

Stefano: † 2022.

Massimo: Gardener.

Maria Letizia: Resides in Rome.

Liliana: Now retired.

Silvio, Paolo, & Gabriele.

IV. Maria Cipriani (“Zia Maria”)

Dates: 1920–2010.

Profession: Unskilled upholsterer, seamstress, and housekeeper.

Significance: She managed a 15-person household while simultaneously working in her brother Vincenzo’s business.

Character: Standing 1.58m tall with a full head of white hair in her old age. Known for being exceptionally hardworking, modest, and mentally sharp until the end.

Residence: Borgo Berardi 30 in Ceccano. A tiny two-room apartment without a bathroom/shower, where she lived humbly on a small pension.

V. A Tragic Fate: Isolina Cipriani (1933–1950)

This chapter highlights the moral perils of the post-war era and the family's connection to the world of cinema.

Identity: Daughter of Filomena Cipriani. Isolina was born out of wedlock; according to family tradition, her father was the President of the Italian Republic. She was the niece of Vincenzo Cipriani and the first cousin of Lucia Nadia Cipriani.

The Dream: She aspired to be an actress and played a small role as a martyr in the film Quo Vadis (1951).

The Event: On Monday, September 25, 1950, at the Pensione Trapani (Via Veneto 135/155, Rome), she fell from the 4th/5th floor following a tragic heartbreak involving director Goffredo Alessandrini. Her final cry was: "Goffredo, Goffredo amore mio!"

Death: She passed away after hours of agony on the evening of September 25, 1950, at the Policlinico

hospital.

Literary Record: Documented by Gianni Padoan in the article "Triste favola vera di Isolina Cipriani" (October 1950), which warned of the false illusions of Cinecittà.

VI. Academic Context & Resilience

This chronicle illustrates the transition from traditional craftsmanship to artistic modernity and documents social disruptions:

Intergenerational Transmission: The legacy spans from Enea’s law and lyricism to Vincenzo’s craft and Gabriella’s poetry, culminating in the dance and archival work of Lucia Nadia Cipriani.

Sociological Documentation: The decline of traditional craftsmanship (1870–2020) is made tangible through the closure of Luigi Cipriani’s business during the pandemic.

Moral History: Isolina’s fate serves as a testament to the dark side of the "Dolce Vita" and the film industry.